1149

JAPAN

TALKING POINTS

A MINIATURE encyclopedia of information in regard to Japan. Intended for pastors, Centenary workers and others who have use for a compact reference work from which may be quickly obtained significant facts for incorporation into missionary addresses.

FILE THIS WHERE YOU CAN FIND IT

JAPAN

Talking Points

AREA AND POPULATION

Emigration from Japan is not a luxury, but a stern necessity.

For, with a territory about the size of California, this island empire has a population sixteen times as large, and only seventeen per cent of its land can be used for farming.

There are, consequently, not less than a million Japanese living outside Japan. America, including Hawaii, shelters about 200,000 of them.

Notwithstanding the small percentage of arable territory in Japan, sixty per cent of the population is directly engaged in agriculture.

China was already advanced in civilization while Japan was hardly more than a collection of savage tribes in 660 B.C., when the first Mikado came to the throne.

Now Japan's navy ranks fifth in the world, which gives her foremost position in the Far East and enables her to uphold the Monroe Doctrine in Asia.

TRADE

Japan's foreign trade is six times as large as it was twenty years ago.

Four years have changed Japan from a debtor to a creditor nation. She has redeemed her foreign loans and, up to the present, lent her Allies 1,300,000,000 yen or about $650,000,000.

Compulsory military training was established forty-five years ago and the system now calls out over 200,000 young men every year.

The exigencies of the war have drawn Japan and United States into closer trade relations than ever before. The United States is Japan's best customer and also heads the list of the nations that sell to Japan.

Japan is enjoying a business and industrial development that will penetrate every market of the world. Shall she not carry Christianity with her into every port?

The five great industrial cities of Japan have increased 325 per cent in population in the last ten years. The rapid industrial expansion has brought great prosperity but also many evils such as twelve to fifteen-hour working days for women and children, and over-crowded and unsanitary conditions in the factories.

Fifty-six per cent of Japan's factory operatives are women. Their death rate is nearly three

times the average rate among Japanese women.

The majority of female workers are under twenty years of age.

More people die yearly of tuberculosis in Japan than were killed in the Russo-Japanese war.

Good form in Japan dictates that a marriage shall be arranged by intermediaries and that the man shall not know personally or care for his wife before marriage. She should be a perfect stranger to him. This rigid etiquette, however, is being modified by western influence.

The result of this systematic arrangement of marriages is an alarmingly high percentage of divorces.

EDUCATION

A national passion for learning has developed in forty-seven years a system of compulsory education which maintains ninety-eight per cent of the children between six and twelve in school.

Japan is the only nation in Asia which now has a public-school system prepared to educate all her people. Thousands of students from China, Korea, the Philippines and India come to her schools and colleges, making these islands a strategic point for Christianity.

The Japanese college is a new driving point for mission work. There is a growing agnosticism

among students. Out of thirty thousand of college grade in Tokyo, nine-tenths definitely enrolled themselves as without religion.

The Y. M. C. A. registered four thousand young men in a year, men who probably would not be reached any other way.

RELIGION

Religion, in which the Japanese have had perfect freedom since 1889, is to most of them a matter of custom and ritual, founded upon reverence for ancestors. Nothing is more alive in Japan, Lafcadio Hearn said, than the dead.

Houses of prostitution are often found near famous shrines, and there are thousands of licensed prostitutes in all parts of the Empire.

Buddhism, which has been steeped in formality for centuries, sees that its hold on the mind of the people shows signs of slipping and is therefore trying to circumvent Christianity by adopting all its practices that attract the Japanese, and by imitating its successful methods.

A Sunday is now observed by the Buddhists; Christmas has a duplicate in Buddha's Day on April 8th, and the Y. M. C. A. has been faithfully copied in the Young Men's Buddhist Association.

Of the 123,000 Protestant church members in Japan, 21,000 are affiliated with the Japan Methodist Church.

Out of the entire 54,000,000 inhabitants it is estimated that 30,000,000 have never heard the gospel.

While the number of Sunday School scholars has increased over three and a half times in fourteen years there is still only one child in fifty connected with a Sunday School.

Tokyo, the fourth city in the world in size and the educational center of Japan, has one Methodist missionary giving all his time and four missionary professors giving part time to evangelistic work.

The Methodist Publishing House in Tokyo will, during the next five years, publish sets of eleven grades of Sunday School lessons to be used all over the empire.

Japanese Christians are doing their part in the Y. M. C. A. work at the front. Major-General N. Hibiki, Quartermaster-General during the Russo-Japanese war, has been sent to France and is working under the general supervision of the Y. M. C. A.

Christianity has recently won over a Buddhist priest, the eighteenth in descent from a Buddhist

monk, now canonized. In every generation of his family there has been a priest. The testimony of this converted priest is very helpful to the cause of Christianity.

The aim of our mission is not to Americanize the Japanese, for their interpretation will probably bring fresh interest and new appreciation to Christian forces in America. They, like ourselves, must think of missionary enterprise in international terms.

Published by
The Centenary Commission
of the Board of Foreign Missions
Methodist Episcopal Church
150 Fifth Avenue
New York
1919